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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from July 2010 to June 2011. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre launched two new projects on armed violence reduction and prevention, and on strengthening the media's role and capacity in advocating and promoting disarmament and non-proliferation in Asia and the Pacific. The Centre continued to organize annual conferences on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, which served as an important forum to assess progress achieved in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, and to discuss the way forward. It expanded its outreach and advocacy activities, and strengthened existing partnerships and interactions with various stakeholders in the region and beyond.

Since the Regional Centre depends solely on voluntary financial contributions to carry out its programmatic activities, it is critical that Member States, in particular those from the region, take full ownership of the Centre and provide political and financial support to its programmatic activities benefiting the Asia-Pacific region.

In this connection, the Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Member States and other donors for their support and financial contributions to the Regional Centre to ensure the sustainability of its activities and operation. The Secretary-General is also grateful to the Government of the host country, Nepal, and other States that have provided financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre.

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I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/39 D, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific is mandated to provide, on request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by the Member States of the Asia-Pacific region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament, through appropriate utilization of available resources. The Centre coordinates the implementation of regional activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. By its resolution 65/83, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction for the activities carried out in the past year by the Regional Centre and expressed its gratitude to the Government of the host country, Nepal, for its cooperation and financial support. The Assembly reaffirmed its strong support for the role of the Centre in the promotion of United Nations activities at the regional level to strengthen peace, stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The present report is submitted in compliance with the above-mentioned request and covers the activities of the Regional Centre during the period from July 2010 to June 2011. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre for the first year of the biennium 2010-2011 is contained in the annex.

II. Activities of the Regional Centre

4. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre focused its programmatic activities on the following areas: promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments; enhancing regional dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and security; and outreach and advocacy.

A. Promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments

5. In its resolution 63/23, entitled "Promoting development through armed violence prevention and reduction", the General Assembly, cognizant of past and ongoing efforts, including within the United Nations system, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through the prevention and reduction of armed violence at the national, regional and international levels, stressed the need for a coherent and integrated approach to the prevention of armed violence, with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development. In order to assist Member States in addressing the challenges posed by armed violence in the Asia-Pacific region, the Regional Centre launched a new project in November 2010 involving regional best practices seminars for Asia and the Pacific on armed violence reduction and prevention.

6. With the financial support of the Government of Switzerland, the Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Nepal, the secretariat of the Geneva

Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), organized the first regional best and promising practices seminar on armed violence reduction and prevention for South and South-East Asia, in Kathmandu, in March 2011. Representatives of 17 Member States from South and South-East Asia, as well as international, regional and civil society organizations participated in the seminar. The seminar was preceded by a one-day preparatory workshop for civil society organizations in the region. Participants discussed specific topics related to armed violence, including youth, gender and urban and rural violence. Joint cooperation between Governments, civil society and the private sector was identified as an effective approach in reducing armed violence. Community-based approaches, the role of the media and integrating gender perspectives into Government programmes aimed at addressing armed violence were also considered. The seminar proved to be useful in exchanging international, regional and national experiences, good practices and lessons learned to address the armed violence issue in South and South-East Asia. It also contributed to fostering intersectoral and interregional cooperation, and assisted in highlighting mechanisms for assistance to reduce and prevent armed violence in the region.

7. The Regional Centre continued to assist the Government of Nepal in its efforts to address the challenges posed by illicit small arms. Together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Mine Action Service, it organized a capacity-building workshop on small arms and other portable lethal weapons control, in Kathmandu, in September 2010. The workshop took place under the overall umbrella of the Nepal Working Group on Small Arms and Other Portable Lethal Weapons.[1] It focused on strengthening the capacity of Government officials, national and international civil society organizations and United Nations agencies to address issues related to small arms and other portable lethal weapons control in Nepal more effectively. The work of the Working Group resulted in the establishment of a national surveillance system on incidents related to small arms and other portable lethal weapons in Nepal.

8. The Regional Centre provided substantive support for a regional workshop on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in South-East Asia, held in Hanoi from 28 September to 1 October 2010. The workshop, organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, aimed to enhance national capacities for the management of export control processes at a practical level and to improve sharing of information and experience among participating countries. It also facilitated technical assistance related to the implementation of the resolution.

9. To promote the process of an arms trade treaty, the Regional Centre supported the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in organizing a regional seminar, entitled "Supporting the Arms Trade Treaty Negotiations through Regional Discussions and Expertise Sharing", in Central, South and South-East Asia, which was held in Kathmandu from 10 to 12 November 2010. Representatives of 20 countries as well as from international, regional and civil society organizations participated in the seminar. The participants discussed some elements of an arms trade treaty, including its scope, parameters and implementation. The seminar also supported the importance of a region-specific approach on this issue.

[1] The Working Group was established by the Regional Centre, together with the South Asia Regional Office of the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Mine Action Service-Nepal, in July 2010.

10. Through its assistance to the Peace Support Working Group, Nepal, the Regional Centre contributed substantively to the elaboration by the Government of Nepal of its National Action Plan on Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), which was adopted and launched in February 2011. Nepal is the first country in South Asia, the second in Asia and the twenty-fourth on the international level to have such a plan. The Centre will continue to provide substantive support to the Peace Support Working Group and to assist the Government of Nepal in the implementation of its National Action Plan.

B. Promoting regional dialogue and confidence in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and security

11. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea, organized two annual conferences on disarmament and non-proliferation issues aimed to address pressing matters in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation at the international and regional levels. The conferences were important forums for Government officials, experts and representatives of academia and civil society to engage in frank discussions on those questions.

12. In cooperation with the Government of Japan and Saitama City, Japan, the Regional Centre organized the twenty-second United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, entitled "A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Making Steady Progress from Vision to Action", which was held from 25 to 27 August 2010. The Conference drew more than 80 participants and observers from Governments, international organizations, research and academic institutions, as well as civil society. It was also open to citizens of Saitama City. The Conference assessed the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and addressed ways to make progress in achieving nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also discussed the Nuclear Security Summit as well as concrete actions towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. In addition, regional disarmament and non-proliferation challenges were addressed at the Conference, including ways to promote confidence-building measures in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, the role of civil society in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education was on the agenda of the Conference, as was the role of academic and research institutes in laying the foundation for multilateral disarmament diplomacy.

13. On the margins of the Conference, the Regional Centre, in cooperation with Saitama City, organized a disarmament education workshop for high school students, which enabled students and teachers from four high schools in the city to present their views on current disarmament and non-proliferation challenges, and to hold lively and proactive discussions with some of the participants in the Conference.

14. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea, organized the Ninth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held in Jeju, Republic of Korea, on 2 and 3 December 2010. The Conference, entitled "Nuclear Renaissance and International Peace and Security", brought together 40 participants from Governments, civil society, academic institutions and intergovernmental organizations to discuss challenges and opportunities for global nuclear expansion

and to address the impact of nuclear renaissance on international and regional peace and security.

15. At the Conference, participants discussed the challenges, opportunities and implications of the recent trend of global nuclear energy expansion as it relates to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well as enhancing nuclear security and preventing nuclear terrorism, and stressed the importance of closer coordination and cooperation among States and relevant international organizations in this regard. The Conference welcomed the outcome of the Nuclear Security Summit, held in 2010, and expressed the hope that the second Summit, to be held in Seoul in 2012, would address more concrete actions towards nuclear security.

16. In cooperation with the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, and with financial support from the Government of China, the Regional Centre organized a regional workshop for East and South-East Asia on Strengthening the Capacity of the Media in Advocating and Promoting Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, held in Beijing on 20 and 21 January 2011. Over 50 participants, including senior media professionals from 11 East and South-East Asian countries, disarmament experts from think tanks and international organizations participated in the workshop, which was the first in recent years to focus on the role of the media in promoting disarmament. The workshop provided a unique platform for frank and open discussions among media professionals, disarmament experts and civil society representatives on disarmament topics, including ways and means to strengthen a two-way communication approach and cooperation between the disarmament community and the media to promote joint efforts to advance disarmament and non-proliferation. The role of the new social media in such efforts was also addressed.

17. The workshop recognized the key role played by the media in raising the profile and public awareness of disarmament issues and in shaping the policies and actions of Governments in this regard. Participants also presented the media's perspectives, including challenges in reporting on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

C. Partnership, outreach and advocacy

18. The Regional Centre continued to strengthen partnerships by promoting information-sharing and dialogue, and exploring joint initiatives and projects with regional stakeholders, including Member States, regional and subregional organizations, other United Nations entities, as well as civil society.

19. To promote the "Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence", initiated by the International Action Network on Small Arms, the Regional Centre, together with other members of the Nepal Working Group on Small Arms and Other Portable Lethal Weapons, organized outreach activities in Kathmandu, including an awareness-raising and capacity-building workshop on combating gun violence in Nepal, in June 2011. The workshop was attended by parliamentarians, political leaders and the media, and focused on testimonies of survivors of gun violence and the relevance of the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons, and an arms trade treaty in the context of combating the scourge caused by illicit small arms in the country.

20. The Regional Centre enhanced its partnerships with regional and other intergovernmental organizations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, as well as such United Nations agencies as UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as academic institutions and regional non-governmental organizations. Efforts are under way to explore joint initiatives and projects on peace and disarmament-related issues.

21. The Regional Centre continued its outreach efforts by regularly distributing its newsletter and updating its website (www.unrcpd.org.np) to ensure that regular and accurate information about its work, as well as relevant global and regional developments in the area of peace and disarmament, are consistently provided to the end-users.

D. Future activities

22. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre launched its new projects on enhancing public security and stability in Asia and the Pacific through armed violence reduction and prevention, and on strengthening the capacity of the media in advocating and promoting peace and disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. The Centre intends to continue conducting additional regional seminars and workshops to implement the two projects. In addition, it plans to launch its Inter-Institutional Training Course for Law Enforcement Officers, which was developed with a view to strengthening the capacities of countries in their efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at the national level and across the region. The Centre is also exploring with Member States, donors and other stakeholders in the region the possibility of developing additional projects that meet the practical needs of countries in the region in the fields of disarmament and arms control.

III. Staffing and financing

23. The Regional Centre continues to rely on extrabudgetary resources for its core staff. The Governments of Switzerland and Nepal continued to support the Centre in funding a Special Coordinator for Peace and Disarmament Programmes, a United Nations Volunteer and local support staff.

24. The Secretary-General would like to express his appreciation to Member States for their support in making provision in the regular budget, starting in the biennium 2010-2011, for two posts (1 P-3 and 1 General Service) as well as providing an allocation from the regular budget to cover a portion of the operating costs of the Regional Centre. This additional capacity contributed to establishing a stable core team of skilled Professional and support staff at the Centre to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively.

25. During 2010, voluntary contributions in the amount of $295,503 were received from Member States. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to those Member States and the civil society organizations that have contributed to the Regional Centre, namely, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand and Turkey, as well as the Tokyo Club. These financial and in-kind contributions are essential to ensure the sustainability of the

operation of the Centre, its core activities and its programmes. The Secretary-General urges all Member States, in particular those from the region, as well as other donors to provide financial resources in support of the Centre's programme benefiting the Asia-Pacific region.

IV. Conclusion

26. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre expanded its scope of activities by initiating new projects developed with a view to addressing the specific needs of Member States in the region in the area of peace and disarmament. The Centre's annual conferences on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation continued to serve as important forums to discuss in an open and frank manner some of the key disarmament and non-proliferation challenges facing the international community at the international and regional levels, and to identify possible ways and means to meet those challenges. The Centre also stepped up its efforts to strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders in the region with a view to achieving synergy in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation activities in the region.

27. As the principal United Nations regional entity to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues in the Asia-Pacific region, the Regional Centre strives to develop and implement projects which meet the actual needs of Member States in the region in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. In order to enable the Centre to attain that goal, it is critical that Member States, especially those from the region, continue to provide political and financial support to the Regional Centre.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for 2010

(United States dollars)

Fund balance, 31 December 2009	**559 837**
Income, 1 January-31 December 2010	
Voluntary contributions	295 503
Interest income	12 115
Other/miscellaneous income	599
Subtotal	**868 054**
Expenditure, 1 January-31 December 2010	209 384
Programme support costs	22 592
Subtotal	**231 976**
Prior-period adjustments	—
Reserves and fund balance, 31 December 2010	**636 078**

Note: The information is based on the statement of income and expenditure for 2010. During the period, contributions totalling $295,503 were received from China ($50,000), Japan ($70,841), Kazakhstan ($10,000), Nepal ($90,228), Pakistan ($4,959), Switzerland ($66,475) and Thailand ($3,000).

During the period 1 January to 31 May 2011, additional contributions totalling $237,041 were received from China ($50,000), Nepal ($88,697), Pakistan ($4,988), the Republic of Korea ($50,000), Switzerland ($21,719.50), Turkey ($10,000) and the Tokyo Club ($11,636.68).